

### CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A decorative or shiny coating for deposit directly on an article, said coating comprising:
  - a first leveling layer comprised of polymeric material deposited directly on at least a portion of the surface of said article to provide a leveling effect thereto, said article formed from plastic, ceramic, or metal; and
  - a second decorative layer comprised of a compound selected from the group consisting of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium/titanium alloy compound on said first leveling layer.
45. (Currently Amended) The coating of claim 1 wherein said first leveling layer of polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of polycarbonate, polyester, polymethacrylate, polystyrene, acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene, styrene-acrylonitrile, alkyd resin, polyethylene, and blends and copolymers thereof.
46. (Previously Added) The coating of claim 1 wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of a nitride, an oxide, a carbide, or a carbonitride of zirconium, titanium or zirconium/titanium alloy.
47. (Currently Amended) The coating of claim 1 further comprising a third protective layer comprised of a polymeric material selected from the group consisting of polyurethane, polyacrylate or polymethacrylate on said second decorative layer.
48. (Currently Amended) A decorative or shiny coating for deposit directly on an article, said coating comprising:

a first leveling layer comprised of polymeric material deposited directly on at least a portion of the surface of said article to provide a leveling effect thereto, said article formed from plastic, ceramic, or metal;

a second adhesion promoting layer selected from the group consisting of zirconium, titanium or zirconium/titanium alloy on said first leveling layer; and

a third decorative layer comprised of a compound selected from the group consisting of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium/titanium alloy compound on said second adhesion promoting layer.

49. (Currently Amended) The coating of claim 48 wherein said first leveling layer of polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of polycarbonate, polyester, polymethacrylate, polystyrene, acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene, styrene-acrylonitrile, alkyd resin, polyethylene, and blends and copolymers thereof.

50. (Previously Added) The coating of claim 48 wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of a nitride, an oxide, a carbide, or a carbonitride of zirconium, titanium or zirconium/titanium alloy.

51. (Currently Amended) The coating of claim 48 further comprising a fourth protective layer comprised of a polymeric material selected from the group consisting of polyurethane, polyacrylate or polymethacrylate on said third decorative layer.

52. (Currently Amended) A decorative or shiny coating for deposit directly on an article, said coating comprising:

a first leveling layer comprised of polymeric material deposited directly on at least a portion of the surface of said article to provide a leveling effect thereto, said article formed from plastic, ceramic, or metal; and

a decorative sandwich layer comprised of alternating layers of compounds selected from the group consisting of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium/titanium alloy compound on said first leveling layer.

53. (Currently Amended) The coating of claim 52 wherein said first leveling layer of polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of polycarbonate, polyester, polymethacrylate, polystyrene, acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene, styrene-acrylonitrile, alkyd resin, polyethylene, and blends and copolymers thereof.

54. (Previously Added) The coating of claim 52 wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of a nitride, an oxide, a carbide, or a carbonitride of zirconium, titanium or zirconium/titanium alloy.

55. (Currently Amended) The coating of claim 54 wherein said decorative sandwich layer is comprised of alternating layers comprised of zirconium nitride and titanium nitride.

56. (Currently Amended) The coating of claim 52 further comprising a top protective layer comprised of a polymeric material selected from the group consisting of polyurethane, polyacrylate or polymethacrylate on said sandwich layer.

57. (Currently Amended) The coating of claim 52 further comprising an adhesion promoting layer selected from the group consisting of zirconium, titanium or zirconium/titanium alloy disposed intermediate said first leveling layer and said decorative sandwich layer.

58. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a decorative or shiny appearance to an article, said method comprising:

applying a first leveling layer comprised of a polymeric material deposited directly on at least a portion of the surface of said article to provide a leveling effect thereto, said article formed from plastic, ceramic, or metal; and

applying a second decorative layer comprised of a compound selected from the group consisting of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium/titanium alloy compound on said first leveling layer.

59. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 58 further comprising the step of applying a third protective layer comprised of a polymeric material selected from the group consisting of polyurethane, polyacrylate or polymethacrylate on said second decorative layer.

60. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a decorative or shiny appearance to an article, said method comprising:

applying a first leveling layer comprised of a polymeric material deposited directly on at least a portion of the surface of said article to provide a leveling effect thereto, said article formed from plastic, ceramic, or metal;

applying a second layer comprised of zirconium, titanium or zirconium/titanium alloy on said first layer; and

applying a third layer comprised of a compound selected from the group consisting of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium/titanium alloy compound on said second layer.

61. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 further comprising the step of applying a fourth protective layer comprised of a polymeric material selected from the group consisting of polyurethane, polyacrylate or polymethacrylate on said third layer.

62. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a decorative or shiny appearance to an article, said method comprising:

applying a first leveling layer comprised of a polymeric material deposited directly on at least a portion of the surface of said article to provide a leveling effect thereto, said article formed from plastic, ceramic, or metal; and

applying a decorative sandwich layer comprised of alternating layers of compounds selected from the group consisting of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium/titanium alloy compound on said first layer.

63. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 62 further comprising the step of applying a protective layer comprised of a polymeric material selected from the group consisting of polyurethane, polyacrylate or polymethacrylate on said sandwich layer.